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June 1, 2023

**Via ECF electronic filing**

Honorable Rukhsanah L. Singh, U.S.M.J.  
United States District Court  
District of New Jersey  
Clarkson S. Fisher Building & U.S. Courthouse  
402 East State Street Room 2020  
Trenton, NJ 08608

Re: DeBenedetto v. Lacey Township Board of Education, et al.  
Case No. 3:21-cv-08050-GC-RLS  
Our File No. 10474-32524

Dear Judge Singh:

This office represents Defendants the Lacey Township Board of Education (“Board” or “District”), Gregory Brandis, and Mark Angelo (collectively “Lacey Defendants”) in the above-referenced matter. At the suggestion of Your Honor’s law clerk, I write regarding the settlement conference currently scheduled before Your Honor on June 16, 2023. The conference is scheduled to be an in-person conference. However, June 16 is also the date of the District’s high school graduation ceremony. My client representative, Dr. Vanessa Pereira, is the Superintendent of Schools, and she has required duties in the District on that date which she cannot miss. In light of this conflict, I have spoken with counsel for both the Plaintiff and for Co-Defendant Ocean County Vocational Technical School (“OCVTS”), and in light of those conversations I propose two solutions for the Court to consider.

First, because Dr. Pereira is an institutional representative and not a named party, and because any settlement agreement reached in principle must be approved at a subsequent meeting of the Board, one solution is to permit the conference to continue forward on June 16, 2023, with counsel present, and with Dr. Pereira reachable by telephone. This first option is the preferred course of action for the Board. Based upon my conversations with OCVTS’ counsel, I believe that this is also the preferred course of action for OCVTS, whose administration may have similar duties involving the conclusion of the school year.

Second, the settlement conference could be re-scheduled for a time at which all parties are able to attend in person. One possible date, depending on Your Honor’s calendar, is Wednesday, June 21, 2023, which is an open date for the parties and their counsel. If not that date, then the parties can work with the Court to identify another date acceptable for all involved. Based upon my conversations with Plaintiff’s counsel, this is the Plaintiff’s preferred course of action.

Finally, I wish to confirm that, as discussed during the previous conference, because the insurance representative for both Defendants is based in Tennessee, the Court will permit him to participate in this settlement conference remotely regardless of the date on which it occurs.

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Therefore, I ask that the Court direct the parties whether we may continue forward with the conference as scheduled on June 16, 2023, with Dr. Pereira reachable by telephone, or whether the settlement conference should be rescheduled June 21, 2023, or another later date. Thank you for the Court's consideration of this request.

Respectfully submitted,

CAPEHART & SCATCHARD, P.A.

*/s/ Geoffrey N. Stark*

Geoffrey N. Stark, Esq.

cc: Mr. Albert J. Rescinio, Esq. (via ECF electronic filing)  
Mr. James A. Birchmeier, Esq. (via ECF electronic filing)